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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine what personal attributes, in the opinion of teachers, were needed by the effective educator. Once identified, these attributes would be assessed in entering and exiting students in the teacher education program at the University of Wisconsin. A theoretical model for the "ideal teacher" was devised listing seven facets of a symmetrical person: Alive, Spiritual, Purposive, Truthful, Loving, Moral, and Intelligent. A questionnaire was developed, and reactions were solicited from approximately 200 teachers. The project sought to obtain teacher reactions to the symmetrical model of personal attributes as requisite to the ideal educator and to seek their interpretations of the extent to which the university's teacher preparation program and their participation in field experience programs had separate and/or joint responsibilities for the development of these personal attributes. Those responding indicated minimal acceptance of the attributes. This minimal support for affective attributes seemed alarming for persons concerned with confluent education in teacher education programs. Suggestions for strengthening confluent teacher education curricula are presented at the end of the report. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the document. (JD)

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TEACHER REACTIONS TO PROPOSED PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE (AND AFFECTIVE) EDUCATOR*

by

Patricia J. Koll and Robert L. Bodine

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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During 1976, the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh College of Education developed a model for curricular investigation and restructure. One component of this model is "Personal Attribute Assessment". The goals of this component include identification of those personal attributes needed by the effective educator. Once identified, these attributes would be assessed in entering and exiting students in the teacher education program. In addition, specific curricular changes would be implemented to facilitate the development of these personal attributes in students.

What attributes would be desirable in an effective educator? The answer to this question will vary depending upon which theoretical framework is selected as a base. The authors selected a confluent educational model for initial investigation. The particular confluent model used was one proposed by Dr. Leonore Dickmann (1976). The Dickmann model is a theoretical model for viewing the personal qualities which enable individuals to be symmetrical human beings. "The Seven Sides of Symmetry" is the theoretical framework which articulates components of a whole or complete person; i.e. a symmetrical person. The proposed model outlines seven facets of this symmetrical person: Alive, Spiritual, Purposive, Truthful, Loving, Moral, and Intelligent. Each facet is then articulated in terms of seven representative words which help to define the facet; e.g., the words precise, candid, authentic, sincere, perfect, factual, and honest are suggested as attributes which identify the "Truthful" facet of a symmetrical person. Dickmann's purpose in proposing this theoretical model was to ". . . stimulate thought and perhaps point the way to additional theorizing which may prove more correct."

There is an abundance of literature in the field which supports both the authors' and Dickmann's position that teacher preparation programs need to help potential educators develop a wholistic or balanced view of education (Brown, 1971; Borton, 1970; Miller, 1976; Ringness, 1975). These, like Dickmann, express concern for the lopsided posture which educators and education have traditionally taken.

In an attempt to advance the cause of education for the "whole" person and to test the Dickmann theoretical model, the Curriculum and Supervision program at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh informally adopted the Dickmann framework as an initial working model of the "ideal" educator whom the program hoped to claim as its product. However, no formal attempt was made to solicit the views of educators in the field concerning this theoretical model. Do these people perceive personal qualities (attributes) requisite of an educator as a component of the "ideal educator?" If so, do these people agree on which attributes are needed?

To answer these questions, a formal attempt was made to solicit the views of educators concerning this theoretical model. This project therefore sought to survey teachers in the field to (1) obtain their reactions to "The Seven Sides of Symmetry" as a model of personal attributes requisite in the "ideal educator", and (2) to seek their interpretations of the extent to which the university's teacher preparation program and their participation in field experience programs had separate and/or joint responsibilities for the development of these personal attributes. In addition, suggestions were solicited on how

these various attributes could be developed. The data gathered would serve as a basis for testing the acceptability of the Dickmann theoretical framework and for recommending instructional/curricular revisions within the College of Education programs.

METHOD

During the Spring of 1976 a survey form (appendix A) was developed based on the Dickmann theoretical model. These questionnaires were hand delivered to 24 Oshkosh Area Schools and were addressed to 190 teachers. The respondents were given one week to complete the questionnaire. A follow-up letter was delivered to all of the schools at the end of that week to encourage those who had not completed the questionnaire to do so within the next five days. The first author visited the schools again at the end of the five days to pick up additional responses and to encourage potential respondents to complete the questionnaire.

In total three letters, a cover letter and two follow-up letters, were used to encourage respondents to complete the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were collected and responses converted to percentages. Results were computed for the total sample as well as various subgroups within the sample (elementary, secondary, special education, K-12, and counselors). In addition, lists of suggestions for curricular change/development were generated from the responses to the open-ended items.

RESULTS

The project sought to survey teachers in the field to obtain their reaction to "The Seven Sides of Symmetry" as a model for development of personal attributes requisite in the "ideal educator." The sample included teachers in 24 Oshkosh Area Public Schools. Table 1 summarizes the composition of the respondent group by level or area of specialization.

TABLE 1

COMPOSITION OF THE RESPONDENT GROUP

N=80

K-12	Elementary	Secondary	Special Education	Counselors	Others*
10	16	27	11	7	9

*Others includes Nursery, Pre-Schools, Vocational-Technical, and Unidentified.

Table 2 summarizes the responses to the questionnaire in general. It presents the percentages of respondents who agreed with the language of the various facets of the thecretical model.

TABLE 2

PERCENT OF SAMPLE FAVORING THE MODEL

Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Sp.Ed.	Coun.	Other
54	56	58	57	41	38	62

Table 3 presents the percentages of respondents who favored each facet in the "Seven Sides of Symmetry" model by category of sample.

TABLE 3

RESULTS BY FACETS

FACETS	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Alive	53%	53%	57%	57%	40%	37%	65%
Spiritual	64	70	66	65	61	43	70
Purposive	54	53	57	57	43	41	61
Truthful	51	51	54	54	39	41	54
Loving	52	53	60	57	38	33	56
Moral	51	53	54	57	29	39	60
Intelligent	52	59	55	55	38	31	66

Tables 4-10 present the percentages of responses in favor of the specific attributes within each of the seven facets or dimensions of the "symmetrical person" model.

TABLE 4

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "ALIVE" FACET

ALIVE	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Healthy	78%	80%	81%	81%	64%	57%	89%
Sound	45	30	56	48	18	43	67
Progressive	66	80	56	77	55	43	67
Fresh	51	50	56	56	45	29	56
Spontaneous	80	90	88	77	64	71	89
Vital	39	30	44	41	27	14	67
Invincible	14	10	19	15	9	0	22

TABLE 5

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "SPIRITUAL" FACET

SPIRITUAL	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Resilient	44%	40%	38%	44%	55%	14%	67%
Alert	68	70	69	67	64	43	89
Responsive	69	70	69	78	64	29	78
Joyous	44	40	63	41	36	29	44
Resourceful	68	90	63	70	64	43	67
Patient	80	90	81	81	73	86	67
Humoristic	76	90	81	74	73	57	78

TABLE 6

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "PURPOSIVE" FACET

PURPOSIVE	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Free	32%	20%	38%	37%	18%	29%	38%
Rational	68	80	56	74	55	43	89
Lawful	44	50	53	48	36	14	44
Creative	81	80	88	81	82	71	78
Individual	58	50	69	56	45	57	67
Disciplined	78	80	81	81	64	71	78
Perfectible	16	10	19	22	0	0	33

TABLE 7

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "TRUTHFUL" FACET

TRUTHFUL	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Precise	39%	50%	38%	52%	9%	29%	33%
Candid	41	40	25	48	55	14	56
Authentic	51	40	63	48	36	71	56
Sincere	84	90	81	85	82	71	89
Perfect	10	10	19	11	0	0	11
Factual	44	50	63	48	9	29	44
Honest	86	80	94	89	82	71	89

TABLE 8

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "LOVING" FACET

LOVING	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Peaceful	45%	30%	63%	37%	45%	29%	67%
Merciful	36	40	50	37	9	29	44
Unselfish	70	70	81	78	64	57	44
Humble	49	50	63	56	36	14	44
Brotherly	43	40	25	56	45	14	56
Faithful	50	60	69	59	9	14	56
Just	73	80	69	78	55	71	78

TABLE 9

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "MORAL" FACET

MORAL	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Loyal	61%	70%	81%	63%	18%	43%	78%
Courageous	48	50	63	48	9	57	56
Open	65	60	44	81	60	43	78
Harmonious	49	50	69	44	27	29	67
Optimistic	66	70	44	74	73	57	78
Pure	21	20	25	30	0	14	22
Good	46	50	56	56	18	29	44

TABLE 10

RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES FOR "INTELLIGENT" FACET

INTELLIGENT	Total Sample	K-12	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	Coun.	Other
Intuitive	56%	60%	60%	52%	45%	29%	89%
Knowledgeable	81	90	88	81	73	57	89
Understanding	85	90	81	78	82	100	100
Judicious	44	60	38	52	27	29	44
Apperceptive	33	40	31	44	9	0	44
Visionary	40	50	44	48	18	0	56
Scientific	27	20	44	30	9	0	43

The questionnaire provided space for respondents to submit additional or alternative facet labels and/or personal attributes. Although no facet labels were suggested, the following personal attributes were added, one by each of seven different respondents:

under Alive	under Loving	under Intelligent
Vivacious	Caring	Broad-minded
Alert	Fair	Open-minded
		"Common sensical"

The second segment of the questionnaire solicited suggestions from respondents for ways in which (1) the UW-O College of Education could facilitate the development of these personal facets/attributes in potential educators, and (2) cooperating personnel in the field could do the same. Although the instruction for this segment of the questionnaire defined "ways" as approaches, procedures, activities, and experiences, and although the space was apportioned between each of the seven facets, this portion of the questionnaire represented a free response format. The two lists of responses follow, one for the College of Education and one for cooperating personnel in the field.

RESPONDENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WAYS IN WHICH DESIRED FACETS/ATTRIBUTES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN POTENTIAL EDUCATORS

( ) = category of qualities

By the UW-O College of Education

1. Offer Personal Hygiene courses (Alive)
2. Require Humor in the Classroom course (Spiritual)
3. Offer Self-Discipline course (Purposive)
4. Require strong subject matter background (Intelligent)
5. Model these qualities (All)
6. Nothing! These qualities can't be taught (All)
7. Continue Physical Education, Music, Drama, etc. courses (Alive)
8. Encourage leisure time activities that are physical (Alive)
9. Create atmosphere in college classes of warmth and acceptance (Spiritual)
10. Teach value clarifying techniques (Purposive) (All)
11. Require viewing of Leo Buscaglia tapes (Loving)
12. Teach "I'm OK, You're OK" strategies (Loving)
13. Keep abreast of the latest trends in education (Alive)
14. Hold workshops in affective education (All)
15. Develop self-assessment surveys which will cause students to be more aware of these qualities (All)
16. Develop a form based on these qualities which could be used as a "screening" device before student teaching (All)
17. Include more teaching experience than presently exists in the program (Alive)
18. Arrange the schedule during the student teaching semester such that the experience is not crowded by other responsibilities causing frustration (All)
19. Establish and allow education students to take more classes in humanities (All)

RESPONDENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WAYS IN WHICH DESIRED FACETS/ATTRIBUTES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN POTENTIAL EDUCATORS

( ) = category of qualities

By Cooperating Personnel in the Field

1. Model these qualities, set an example (All)
2. Encourage student teachers to participate in programs such as Hot Line, Big Brother/Sister, visiting the elderly, etc. (All)
3. Set up team teaching opportunities for the student teacher so that he/she teams with someone who has these qualities (All)
4. Encourage the clinical student or student teacher to become involved in out-of-the-classroom activities with children (Loving)
5. Include the student teacher in decision-making experiences (Moral)
6. Hold group discussions about these qualities with student teachers (All)
7. Give student teacher "surprise" assignments at times to force flexibility if necessary (Alive)
8. Role-play a parent-teacher, student-teacher conference with the student teacher (Truthful)
9. Help the university weed-out "misfits"; screen out unsuited candidates as early as possible (All)
10. Nothing! Teaching candidates either have it or they don't--you can't teach these qualities (All)
11. Have the student teacher observe teachers who have these qualities (All)
12. Have the student teacher observe a wide variety of teachers (All)
13. Spend more time with the student teacher on "how to teach children" and less time on "how to teach reading, etc." (All)
14. Set high expectations of a student teacher's performance and hold to them (All)
15. Successful teachers in the field should write articles expressing the importance of these personal qualities (All)
16. Expose student teachers to guests from the community who have these qualities (All)
17. Encourage the student teacher to be creative and innovative (Alive, Purposive)

Percentage of Return

The percentage of return on the questionnaire was low (42%). One can only speculate on the reasons for the low rate of return, but the following are probably the most valid explanations:

1. The questionnaire may have been inconveniently timed. The questionnaire was distributed to all potential respondents on Friday, May 21, with the request that it be completed by Friday, May 28. This is a particularly busy time of year for many teachers.
2. Teachers may feel uncomfortable dealing with an affective focus for a multiplicity of reasons: some may feel personally inadequate themselves, others feel inadequate to the task of facilitating the personal development of others, others stress only cognitive competencies, still others may find it difficult to deal with a theoretical framework or with an "ideal" concept.
3. Another possible explanation for the comparatively low rate of return may be that teachers do acknowledge the importance of personal qualities but chose to disregard the questionnaire because they feel that affective development is not "teachable." There exists an "heredity camp" which contends that a teacher is "born" and not nurtured and that such humanistic concerns are beyond the reach of a university's teacher preparation program.
4. Many have acknowledged a history of animosity between university "ivory tower" researchers/theorists and "firing line" practitioners in the field. The questionnaire may have met with the fate of any attempt by university personnel to bridge the gap; i.e., burial in the circular file.

Overall Results:

In view of the 54%/46% expression of the total sample, it appears that respondents generally did not endorse the personal facets/attributes cited in the theoretical model. If a minimum 66% criterion is used to represent strong agreement, then only the "Other" subgroup classification of respondents comes close to that criterion (62%). If respondents do feel strongly about the importance of personal qualities for effective teaching but felt that those cited were not the "right" ones, they had an opportunity to suggest other facets and attributes. Only seven of the 80 respondents did so, a finding which tends to corroborate the generally neutral position discussed above. It appears that practitioners in the field do not feel strongly about what personal attributes would be possessed by an "ideal" educator.

Response to the Individual Facets:

Of the seven facets of personal qualities, only one category received a fairly strong endorsement, that being the Spiritual category (64%). In each of the separate subgroups it received the strongest vote, varying from 43% to 70%. Feedback from respondents prior to submission of the completed questionnaire indicated a confusion between "spiritual" and "religious", with a strong sentiment that this had no place in education. The actual result was a surprise.

Of significance also, is the generally lower expression of agreement for all facets within the Special Education and Counselor groups. One might anticipate that these two groups of educators would be particularly "tuned into" the person. The actual result was, again, surprising.

Response to the Specific Attributes:

Using a minimum of 66 2/3% agreement, it appears that practicing educators deem the following attributes requisite for the "ideal" or "super" teacher:

Healthy	Creative
Spontaneous	Disciplined
Alert	Sincere
Responsive	Honest
Resourceful	Unselfish
Patient	Just
Humoristic	Knowledgeable
Rational	Understanding

The above traits represent all of the facets with the exception that none were included from the "Moral" category. It is interesting to speculate the factors producing that exception. Perhaps it is a reaction to too many years of double standards for teachers' morals.

Using the same percentage as a negative criterion, it appears that practicing educators deem the following traits unimportant in an "ideal" teacher:

Invincible
Free
Perfectible
Perfect
Pure
Apperceptive
Scientific

These traits represent all of the facets with the exception of the "Spiritual" and "Loving" categories. Again, it is interesting to speculate why these particular qualities drew such strong negative responses. Perhaps the definitions of these qualities are more elusive or ambiguous. Certainly the last term is of no surprise for professors of research courses - teachers do not perceive research and the "scientific method" as part of their needed skills in education.

Implications For Colleges of Education:

The response to the survey suggests a need for positive action on the part of the College of Education if it desires to move in the direction of confluent education. These authors believe the College of Education needs to launch a full-scale effort aimed at both pre-service and in-service educators to convince them of the importance of these attributes and to ease their discomfort in dealing with this area.

Research conducted by Rogers (1974) and Aspy (1971) has found that interpersonal conditions are positively related to gains in thinking, achievement, grade point average, and cognitive growth. Aspy (1971) has shown that a school can increase the effectiveness of its learning climate by selecting personnel who possess strengths in interpersonal qualities. He recommends that universities facilitate the "whole person" more adequately in teacher preparation programs.

Implications for the Seven Sides of Symmetry Model:

The general neutrality of the response to the questionnaire need not invalidate "The Seven Sides of Symmetry" as a theoretical model for viewing personal facets of the "ideal educator". If respondents had judged the facets and/or attributes in the model inappropriate in describing an "ideal" teacher, they abstained from suggesting an alternative model in whole or part.

The validity of the Dickmann model could further be tested by submitting it to other groups of practitioners in the field, to groups of students at various stages in the K-12 sequence, and to Education faculty. The response of these groups, or of others, might help to determine the viability of the model as a theoretical framework for viewing personal

facets of the "ideal educator". It or an alternative model needs to be established to provide cohesion for curricular/instructional programs which seek to expand efforts in the direction of humanistic education.

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APPENDIX A

Place a check ( ) next to those qualities which you feel describe the "super teacher." Feel free to add other qualities which you deem requisite. Feel free to suggest other category labels for qualities on the back.

Alive	Spiritual	Purposive	Truthful	Loving	Moral	Intelligent
__ healthy	__ resilient	__ free	__ precise	__ peaceful	__ loyal	__ intuitive
__ sound	__ alert	__ rational	__ candid	__ merciful	__ courageous	__ knowledgeable
__ progressive	__ responsive	__ lawful	__ authentic	__ unselfish	__ open	__ understanding
__ fresh	__ joyous	__ creative	__ sincere	__ humble	__ harmonious	__ judicious
__ spontaneous	__ resourceful	__ individual	__ perfect	__ brotherly	__ optimistic	__ apperceptive
__ vital	__ patient	__ disciplined	__ factual	__ faithful	__ pure	__ visionary
__ invincible	__ humoristic	__ perfectible	__ honest	__ just	__ good	__ scientific
__ (other)	__ (other)	__ (other)	__ (other)	__ (other)	__ (other)	__ (other)
__ _____	__ _____	__ _____	__ _____	__ _____	__ _____	__ _____

Cite specific ways (approaches, procedures, activities, experiences) in which the above qualities can be developed in potential educators.

Qualities	By the UW-O College of Education	By Cooperating Personnel in the Field
Alive qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Spiritual qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Purposive qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Truthful qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Loving qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Moral qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Intelligent qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.
Other qualities	1.	1.
	2.	2.
	3.	3.

Please check level of certification ___K-12 ___Elementary __ Secondary ___Special Ed. ___Counselor